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Complete Update: April 27, 2007

2007 FIRE SEASON OUTLOOK UPDATE

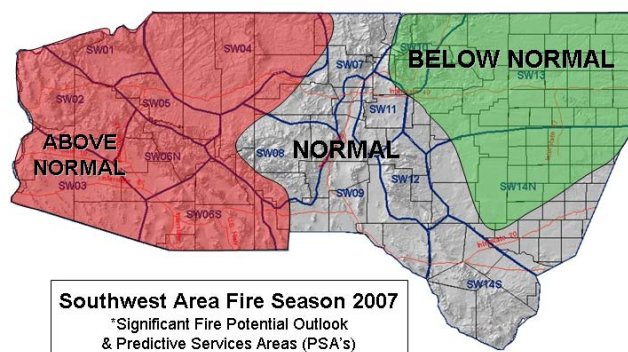
PRODUCT INTENT & DESCRIPTION

This an unscheduled update to the preliminary outlook issued in January, brought about by the fact that below normal winter precipitation was received across the western half of the Southwest Area when above normal precipitation had been forecast. Fire season potential is predicted for the period April – July in terms of the likelihood of significant fire events that will require mobilization of additional resources from outside the area in which they originate. Areas highlighted as “Above Normal” are likely to require additional external resource mobilization.

SUMMARY

The potential for significant wildland fire activity for the 2007 Southwest Area fire season is Above Normal across much of Arizona and the Four Corners area, and Normal to Below Normal elsewhere. West of the continental divide, the season will start earlier than usual, end roughly on time, and involve all elevations and fuel types. Overall, the need for additional firefighting resources from outside the area is expected to be greater than normal this season, mainly from mid-April into July across Arizona.

- Forecast for chances of precipitation into early April, followed by abnormally warm and dry conditions and exacerbation of long term drought through June.
- Elevated fire potential across all elevations and fuel types in Arizona due to drought conditions brought about by lack of winter precipitation.
- Frostkill, abundance of carryover fine herbaceous fuels, and meager green-up to date leading to heavy dead fuel loadings in the grass and brush across Arizona.
- Any green-up from shorter term moisture will further increase the fine fuel loadings in southern and western Arizona and delay the season onset until mid-late April.
- Monsoon to begin roughly on time (early-mid July), with main moisture surge into Arizona and possible below normal rainfall east of the continental divide.
- No significant changes to outlook for the eastern half of the area, where moisture and winter snowpack have been generally above normal and additional moisture is expected.



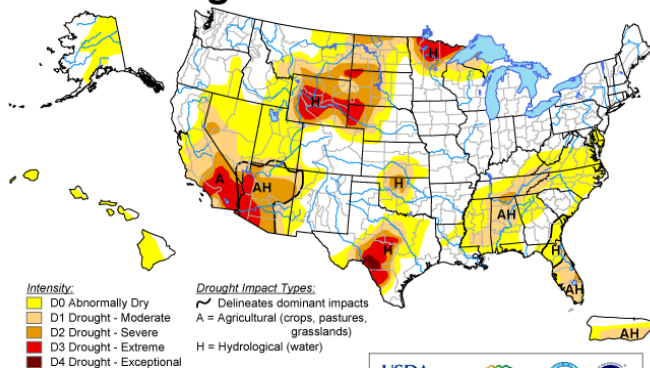
*Significant Fire Potential: The likelihood a fire situation will require mobilization of additional resources from outside the area in which the fire situation originates.

SUPPORTING INPUT DATA

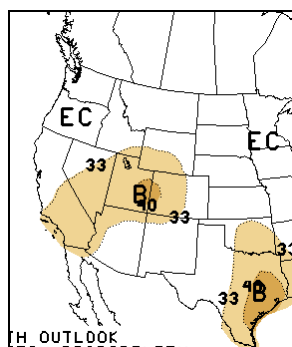
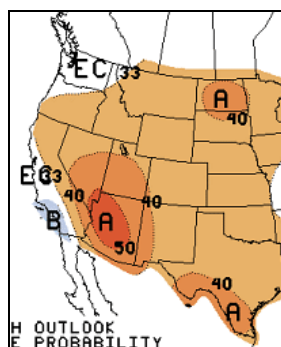
U.S. Drought Monitor

March 13, 2007

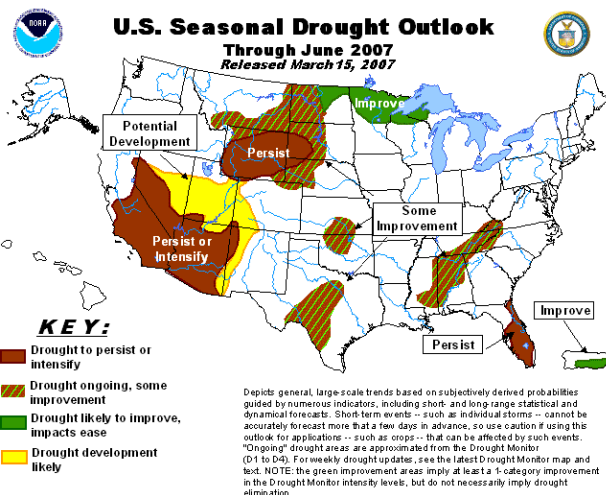
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Most recent U.S. Drought Monitor image shows western portions of the Southwest Area in Severe to Extreme drought. Long term drought acts to increase dead fuel loadings and, depending on more recent conditions, can lead to unusually low fuel moisture values in both live and dead fuels. Low live and dead fuels moisture values, dieback in the brush fuels, and lack of green-up in the grasses across Arizona are related to the drought conditions depicted.



Outlook for the months of April-May-June from the Climate Prediction Center shows warm and relatively dry conditions for the entire southwestern U.S. A rapid transition to what is normally a drier La Niña pattern for the Southwest is a factor in this outlook. While warmer and drier conditions are expected overall, shorter term models (not shown) indicate the potential for significant precipitation into early April.



U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook shows the effects of the forecasted conditions on the current drought situation as shown earlier by the U.S. Drought Monitor. Current drought conditions across Arizona are expected to persist or intensify on the whole through June. This supports updating all of Arizona to reflect Above Normal potential for significant wildland fire activity for the season.

Predictive Services Group
Southwest Coordination Center